

# **THE JACOBS REPORT**

**GILDA Z. JACOBS  
MICHIGAN SENATE  
Assistant Democratic Floor Leader  
FOURTEENTH DISTRICT**

**For Immediate Release  
December 16, 2005**

**Contact: Matt Levin  
(517) 373-7888**

---

## **\$2 BILLION JOB FUND MOVES FORWARD**

### **Governor Appoints Board Members**

Governor Jennifer Granholm announced that she has taken the next step to implement the \$2 billion job creation plan by appointing members to the new Strategic Economic Investment and Commercialization Board (SEIC) and new members to the Michigan Strategic Fund Board (MSF).

“Just a few short weeks after I signed this critical legislation, we continue to move to implement the 21st Century Jobs Initiative and to create incentives for diversifying our economy,” Granholm said. “These distinguished board members will help make Michigan a breeding ground for innovation and turn cutting-edge research into thousands of high-paying jobs for our families.”

Based on the legislation enacted last month, the MSF is responsible for allocating money for capital investments, commercial lending, and commercialization development. The SEIC has independent responsibility for grants and loans made to support competitive-edge technology investments in the areas of life sciences, alternative energy, advanced manufacturing and homeland security and defense.

The board members of the new SEIC include representatives from Michigan’s business, academic, and research communities. The members are:

- A. David Canter, senior vice president, Pfizer Global Research & Development, designated by Granholm as chair of the SEIC
- Judith Bailey, president of Western Michigan University
- John Brown, CEO, Stryker Corporation
- Mary Lincoln Campbell, senior partner, EDF Ventures
- David Cole, chairman, Center for Automotive Research
- Mary Sue Coleman, president of the University of Michigan

- James Croce, CEO, NextEnergy Corporation
- Mike Jandernoa, former chairman and CEO, Perrigo Company
- Hayes W. Jones, deputy director of economic development and community affairs, Oakland County
- David Baker Lewis, chairman, Lewis & Munday, PC
- Glenn D. Mroz, president of Michigan Technological University
- Michael Rao, president of Central Michigan University
- Irvin Reid, president of Wayne State University
- Lou Anna K. Simon, president of Michigan State University
- George F. Vande Woude, director of research, Van Andel Research Institute
- Dennis J. Wend, executive director, National Automotive Center
- David Hollister, director, Department of Labor and Economic Growth
- Jay Rising, state treasurer

Also appointed and reappointed today to serve on the Michigan Strategic Fund Board were:

- George Jackson, president and CEO, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation
- James Herbert, president and CEO, Neogen Corporation
- Richard Rassell, chairman and CEO, Butzel Long
- Charles P. Rothstein, founder and strategic managing director, Beringea LLC

“We are excited about the opportunity to work with such high-quality people to chart the strategic direction of Michigan’s newest economic development initiative,” Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) President and CEO James Epolito said. “The environment being fostered here will attract interest, investment and talent from throughout the nation and world.”

A key component of the 21st Century Jobs Initiative allocates an initial \$400 million of the state’s tobacco settlement revenue in Fiscal Year 2005-06 toward commercialization, capital investment, and commercial lending efforts in the targeted high-tech, high-growth sectors.

Based on the successful model of the Michigan Life Sciences Corridor and Technology Tri-Corridor initiatives, the SEIC will make awards based on an independent, peer-review process conducted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest association of scientists and engineers. Only proposals that meet the program's strict criteria and are judged meritorious by AAAS reviewers will receive funding.

The MEDC will assist in administering the research and commercialization program. In the weeks ahead, the corporation will be working with board members to develop a request for proposals that is expected to be issued in January.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, a partnership between the state and local communities, promotes smart economic growth by developing strategies and providing services to create and retain good jobs and a high quality of life. For more information on MEDC initiatives and programs, visit the Web site at [www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org).

## **BOARD APPROVES HIGHER GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Goal is a World-Class Workforce**

The State Board of Education unanimously approved a set of increased state high school graduation requirements for all Michigan students.

Four years of math and English language arts and three years of science are among the requirements; as well as three credits of social studies, two credits of world languages, and one credit each of health/physical education and visual and performing arts. Currently, only one semester of civics is required for high school graduation under state law.

"This change was absolutely necessary," said State Board of Education President Kathleen N. Straus. "With the evolving economy and global pressures on what education and skills students will need for the jobs of today and tomorrow, we needed to act now."

"What we've done here today is so very important for the future of the State of Michigan," Straus added, "not just for the students, but for the future of the entire state."

Governor Jennifer Granholm, who has advocated for a rigorous mandated state curriculum, joined the Board following its adoption of the new requirements and personally thanked the members for their leadership in this endeavor.

"I appreciate the leadership of every member of this Board who has insisted, and felt, and known that we very much need to up the ante on our expectations of young people in this global economy," Granholm told the State Board.

"Thank you for believing in our kids. Thank you for really painting a future for Michigan that is much more promising than when you began your efforts this morning. I, as Governor, am utterly grateful to you on behalf of our children, and on behalf of the parents, who are grateful to you for requiring a certain core curriculum, and a core curriculum that really dovetails with the economy," Granholm said.

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth Director David Hollister, in his leadership role with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Council of Labor and Economic Growth, and the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors, also addressed the Board. In supporting the new requirements, Hollister explained that a rigorous curriculum and workforce development are the keys to the state's economic growth. He called the Board's action as being critical to the future of Michigan.

The State Board's requirements mirror those presented in November by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Michael Flanagan, with the addition of the two credits of world languages, and the expectation that technology, including assistive technology devices and services, will be infused in the delivery of the new requirements.

The requirements include what is being called the Michigan Merit Curriculum that combines a core list of rigorous academic classes, along with a list of 21st Century skill sets that will be integrated and taught in all courses.

The Michigan Merit Core of academic courses in the State Board's plan include:

- four years of English language arts;
- one year each of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and an additional math class in the senior year;
- one year each of Biology; Physics or Chemistry; and one additional year of science;
- three years of social science, which must include a semester of civics and a semester of economics;
- two years of world languages;
- one year of health/physical education; and
- one year of visual and performing arts.

The State Board also requires that all high school students take the Michigan Merit Exam, or the alternate MI-ACCESS assessment for students with severe disabilities; and that all students complete at least one on-line credit or non-credit course or learning experience, in order to graduate.

"This is a great balance that creates flexibility for school districts," said State Board member Reginald Turner. "It gets us where we should be today and challenges us to think more of where we need to get to tomorrow."

By this action, the State Board exercised its state Constitutional role of leadership, general supervision, general planning and coordination of all public education. The Board went on to

further its partnership with the Executive and Legislative branches of state government by adding in its Resolution an encouragement for the Governor and Legislature to enact complementary legislation.

Governor Granholm has called for the adoption of a state mandated curriculum for all high school students, arguing that Michigan's economy will suffer if the state does not have a highly-educated workforce. She appointed last year The Cherry Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth, which called for higher academic standards to prepare students for greater success in their post-secondary education, and to meet the Governor's goal of doubling the number of college graduates in Michigan.

Based on input from local superintendents, Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) is exploring incentives to encourage more teacher certifications in math and science, two subjects certain to face an increase in demand under these policy changes.

If any necessary legislation is passed and enacted by March 1, 2006, the Michigan Merit Curriculum would begin with the freshman class next year, If legislation is not enacted by that time, the requirements would begin with the following freshman class.

While the State Board's plan would instill rigor into high school graduation requirements, it also provides some flexibility in the form of district phase-in of the curriculum and student modification provisions in limited circumstances after their junior year.

The basis of the recommendations was collected by a research task force of education experts commissioned to study the issues and investigate the best practices of five other states that have implemented high school graduation requirements.

## **BILLBOARD LEGISLATION:**

### **More than Meets the Eye?**

More than a few grumbles surfaced when legislation capping the number of new billboard permits passed the Senate Transportation Committee.

The package, touted as a compromise between environmental groups and outdoor advertisers would allow for no more than 2,500 new permitted signs between now and Dec. 31, 2008. According to Ron DeCook of the Department of Transportation (MDOT), the legislation does not address the 2,200 pending permits that have not yet been made into signs.

Environmentalists don't like the loophole and have also expressed concerns about billboard owners' legal ability to cut down foliage blocking their signs. Language in the package would allow billboard owners to construct advertisements behind plants and then cut down the plants. Environmentalists would prefer that any cutting be restricted to plants that have covered the billboard over time.

"What we have here is an illusion of a moratorium on billboards in exchange of cutting trees," said James CLIFT, of the Environmental Council.

The package consists of Senate Bill 567, introduced by Sen. Tom George (R-Portage); SB 0568 and SB 0911, both introduced by Sen. Judson Gilbert (R-Algonac). The bills passed committee on a straight party vote and now move to the Senate floor.

---

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/> .

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

**Constituents of the 14<sup>th</sup> District may contact Senator Jacobs at [sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov) or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.**

This newsletter is produced in single-space form in order to save paper and transmission costs.

####

Matthew J. Levin  
Legislative Director  
Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, MI 48909-7536  
(517) 373-7888  
[mlevin@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:mlevin@senate.michigan.gov)